

**For Immediate Release:** *January 6, 2011*

**Washington D.C.** – In a letter to the Departments of Justice and Defense today, U.S. Congressmen Duncan Hunter and Brian Bilbray urged Attorney General Eric Holder and Defense Secretary Robert Gates to vigorously defend the Memorial in its entirety. The letter comes in response to the recent ruling by the Ninth Circuit, declaring the Memorial unconstitutional.

“For more than a half-century, the Mount Soledad Memorial has been a fixture of the San Diego community, honoring not only the service and sacrifice of the brave Americans whose stories are told by the monument’s plaques, but millions of others who served in defense of our nation,” said Congressman Hunter. “The Ninth Circuit’s decision is a disservice to these men and women and blatantly ignores the Memorial’s proud history as a symbol of military service. I’m confident that the Memorial will remain intact as the judicial process proceeds, but it’s important that the federal government does whatever it can to defend the Memorial and ensure it remains untouched.”

Congressman Bilbray added, “The Mount Soledad National Veterans Memorial holds a very special place in my heart because the plaques of my father, brothers, and stepfather are among the thousands of stories of military service. It is unfortunate that the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals continues to politicize this sacred Memorial and obstruct the memories and history the landmark proudly represents. I strongly urge Attorney General Holder and Secretary Gates to join Congressman Hunter and myself in continued defense of the memorial.”

A copy of the letter is available [here](#).